



Home > Statistics > Labour > Employment and unemployment > Labour Force, Australia > June 2020

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# Labour Force, Australia

Headline estimates of employment, unemployment, underemployment, participation and hours worked from the monthly Labour Force Survey

Reference period June 2020

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Released 16/07/2020

## On this page

- [Key statistics](#)
- [Survey impacts and changes](#)
- [Unemployment](#)
- [Employment](#)
- [Hours worked](#)
- [Participation](#)
- [Underemployment](#)
- [States and territories](#)
- [Rotation group analysis](#)
- [Data downloads](#)
- [Article archive](#)
- [Methodology](#)
- [Articles](#)

## Key statistics

Seasonally adjusted estimates for June 2020:

- Unemployment rate increased to 7.4%.
- Participation rate increased to 64.0%.
- Employment increased to 12,328,500.
- Employment to population ratio increased to 59.2%.

- Underemployment rate decreased to 11.7%.
- Monthly hours worked increased to 1,665 million hours.

	May-20	Jun-20	Monthly change	Yearly change
<b>Seasonally adjusted</b>				
Employed people	12,117,700	12,328,500	210,800 (1.7%)	-522,300 (-4.1%)
Unemployed people	923,000	992,300	69,300 (7.5%)	280,200 (39.3%)
Unemployment rate	7.1%	7.4%	0.4 pts	2.2 pts
Underemployment rate	13.1%	11.7%	-1.4 pts	3.5 pts
Participation rate	62.7%	64.0%	1.3 pts	-2.0 pts
Monthly hours worked in all jobs	1,600 million	1,665 million	64 million (4.0%)	-100 million (-5.7%)

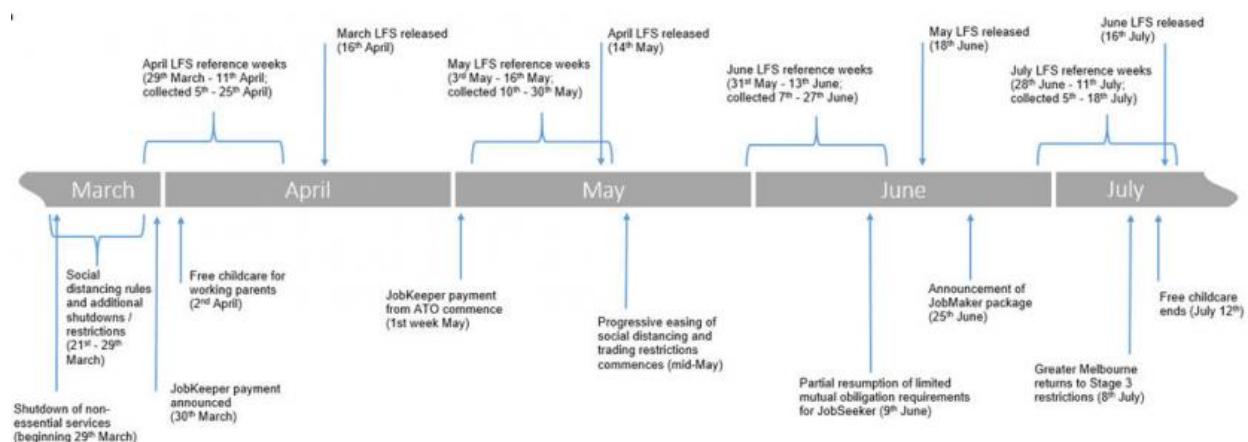
Estimates of changes are calculated using un-rounded level estimates, and may be different from, but are more accurate than, movements obtained from the rounded level estimates.

## Survey impacts and changes

### Survey response and timeline

The ABS is continuing to take active steps to manage the impacts of COVID-19 on Labour Force statistics. For more information on recent developments, refer to the Rotation group analysis.

The June Labour Force Survey was run in respect of the two weeks from Sunday 31 May to Saturday 13 June, and collected over the three weeks from Sunday 7 June to Saturday 27 June.



The ABS would like to thank Australians for their continued support in responding to our surveys during such a difficult time, given how critically important this information is.

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## Continued suspension of trend estimates

Given the extent of change in Labour Force time series, the ABS has temporarily suspended trend series and moved to using forward factors for seasonal adjustment. All estimates within the commentary, including information for the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory, refer to seasonally adjusted data. For more information, please refer to '[Suspension of trend series and changes to seasonal adjustment during the COVID-19 period](#) (/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/apr-2020#covid-19-impacts-and-changes).

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## Treatment of people on JobKeeper, JobSeeker or stood down

People paid through the JobKeeper wage subsidy, in receipt of JobSeeker payments, or stood down by their employer are classified as follows in the Labour Force Survey. This approach:

- is consistent with the long-standing concepts and practices used in the Labour Force Survey; and
- has not resulted in any changes to the [Labour Force Survey questionnaire](#) (/methodologies/labour-force-australia-methodology/apr-2020#data-download).

The ABS will update this information if new scenarios emerge or the conditions of existing scenarios change over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 1. People paid through the JobKeeper wage subsidy: employed

The ABS expects that people who are paid through the JobKeeper scheme will answer the questions in a way that results in them being classified as employed, regardless of the hours they work (e.g. even if they are stood down). People paid through JobKeeper may work less hours, the same hours, or more hours, than usual.

Under the JobKeeper program, eligible businesses and not-for-profit organisations affected by COVID-19 can elect to receive a subsidy to support their employment of eligible employees. Some self-employed people are also eligible to receive the JobKeeper payment.

Employers will pay these employees a wage, within their existing employment relationship, supporting an ongoing attachment to a job.

### 2. People in receipt of the JobSeeker payment: it depends on their labour market

## **activity**

People who receive the JobSeeker or other similar government payments are not automatically classified as unemployed (just as those classified as unemployed will not necessarily be in receipt of a government payment) and how they are categorised depends on how they answer questions around labour market activity.

The JobSeeker payment is paid to people who are looking for work or are sick or injured and cannot undertake their usual work or study for a short time, and who meet the eligibility requirements. People can also receive the JobSeeker payment if they have a job, if they meet a low income test.

Recent changes to the JobSeeker program related to COVID-19 also meant that recipients did not have to meet the usual mutual obligation requirements, such as looking for work. Some of these obligations are gradually being reinstated from June onwards, and changes may lead to increases in active job search and an increase in the number of people classified as unemployed in future months.

To be classified as unemployed in Labour Force statistics, a person must:

- have actively looked for full-time or part-time work in the last four weeks; and
- be available for work in the reference week.

People who were waiting to start a new job within four weeks from the end of the reference week and could have started in the reference week if the job had been available then are also classified as unemployed.

## **3. People not working any hours, including those who were stood down: it depends on their job attachment and pay, and potentially other labour market activity**

A person will be classified as employed if they:

- had taken any kind of paid leave;
- were away from their job for any reason (e.g. they were stood down), and were paid for some part of the previous 4 weeks (which could include wages subsidised through the JobKeeper scheme); or
- were away from their job for four weeks or less for any reason, without pay, but believe they still have a job to go back to (e.g. they were stood down, with no pay).

If a person is away from their job for four weeks or more without pay, or they believe they no longer have a job to be absent from, they will be classified as:

- unemployed - if they have actively looked for work, and are available to start work; or

- not in the labour force - if they have not looked for work and/or are not available to start work.

There will be a range of ways in which people will have been stood down without work as a result of COVID-19. Some may be stood down with pay, some through paid leave (e.g. long service leave, annual leave, etc) and some without pay. Some people will perceive that they still have a job (but just no hours at the moment), while others will consider they have lost their job.

These differences are effectively captured using Labour Force Survey questions, which support the ABS to effectively categorise people and produce key measures of the labour market.

People stood down without pay from late March through to early May were away from their job for four weeks or more and therefore were no longer considered employed in May. This explains part of the further fall in employment in May.

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## New ABS website and changes to Labour Force Survey publications

The ABS will be launching a new website later in 2020. As part of this move to a new website, the Labour Force Survey publications are being redesigned, so that they are simpler, and present data in a way that is easier to find, understand and use.

Labour force data are currently released in three publications:

- Labour Force, Australia (6202.0) - the headline release
- Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic delivery (6291.0.55.001) - monthly release of detailed data
- Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly (6291.0.55.003) - quarterly release of detailed data only collected in February, May, August and November.

On this Beta site, and when the new ABS website is launched, labour force data will move to be released in two publications:

- Labour Force, Australia - which will continue to be the headline release
- Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - which will combine all spreadsheets and pivot tables currently published in the monthly and quarterly detailed releases

The main Labour Force Survey publication has been redesigned for the new ABS website, with improved navigation, thematic presentation of data, additional graphs and the most sought after statistics, increased range of state and territory indicators, greater visibility of notes on important changes or impacts on the estimates (e.g. resulting from COVID-19), and

an improved range of useful explanatory information and resources (in a new 'Methodology page').

The detailed monthly and detailed quarterly labour force survey releases have been combined so that all detailed Labour Force data are available within a single release. The spreadsheets and datacubes within this combined release have been grouped together thematically, so that it is easier to find the data you are looking for. This expanded monthly detailed release will always include the latest monthly and quarterly data, noting that for the 'non-quarter' months, the quarterly spreadsheets and datacubes will have a different reference period. For example, the May issue contains May monthly and May quarterly data, while the June issue will contain June monthly and May quarterly data.

The file names, table names and time series IDs of all the monthly and quarterly time series spreadsheets and datacubes will remain the same.

If you have any questions or feedback on the new approach to release Labour Force Survey data, please contact us at [labour.statistics@abs.gov.au](mailto:labour.statistics@abs.gov.au) (<mailto:labour.statistics@abs.gov.au>)

For further information, please email [labour.statistics@abs.gov.au](mailto:labour.statistics@abs.gov.au) (<mailto:labour.statistics@abs.gov.au>).

## Articles

This months Labour Force release includes the following articles:

- [Flows into and out of employment and unemployment \(/articles/flows-and-out-employment-and-unemployment\)](#)
- [Insights into hours worked \(/articles/insights-hours-worked-june-2020\)](#)
- [Employment and unemployment: An international perspective \(/articles/employment-and-unemployment-international-perspective-june-2020\)](#)

## Unemployment

In seasonally adjusted terms, in June 2020:

- the unemployment rate increased by 0.4 pts to 7.4% (2.2 pts higher than a year ago)
- unemployed people increased by 69,300 to 992,300 (and increased by 280,200 over the

year to June 2020)

- the youth unemployment rate increased by 0.4 pts to 16.4% (and increased by 4.3 pts over the year to June 2020)

## Unemployment rate, Seasonally adjusted



## Employment

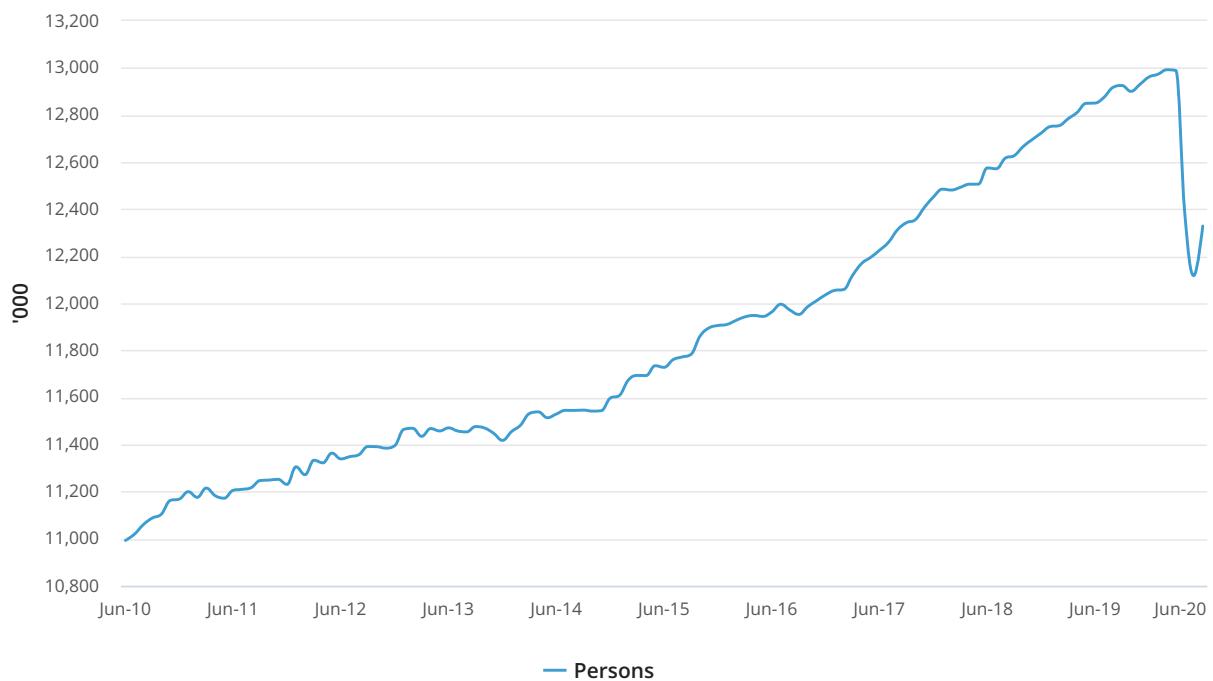
In seasonally adjusted terms, in June 2020:

- employment decreased by 210,800 people (1.7%) to 12,328,500 people
- over the year to June 2020, employment decreased by 4.1% or 522,300 people

Underpinning this net increase in the number of employed people are extensive flows of people into and out of employment. Around 600,000 people entered employment (i.e. they were employed in June but were not employed in May), while around 400,000 people left employment (i.e. they were employed in May but were not employed in June). This contrasts with the previous month, where around 500,000 people entered employment and

around 700,000 people left employment. See the articles [Flows into and out of employment and unemployment](https://author.absweb.aws.abs.gov.au/articles/article-23942) (<https://author.absweb.aws.abs.gov.au/articles/article-23942>) and [People who lost a job or were stood down: Flows analysis](#) ([/articles/people-who-lost-job-or-were-stood-down-flows-analysis-may-2020](#))..

## Employed persons, Seasonally adjusted



## Full-time and part-time employment

In seasonally adjusted terms, in June 2020:

- full-time employment decreased by 38,100 people to 8,489,100 people, and part-time employment increased by 249,000 to 3,590,400 people
- over the year to June 2020, full-time employment decreased by 306,800 people and part-time employment decreased by 215,500 people

This change led to a decrease in the part-time share of employment over the past 12 months, from 31.6% to 31.1%.

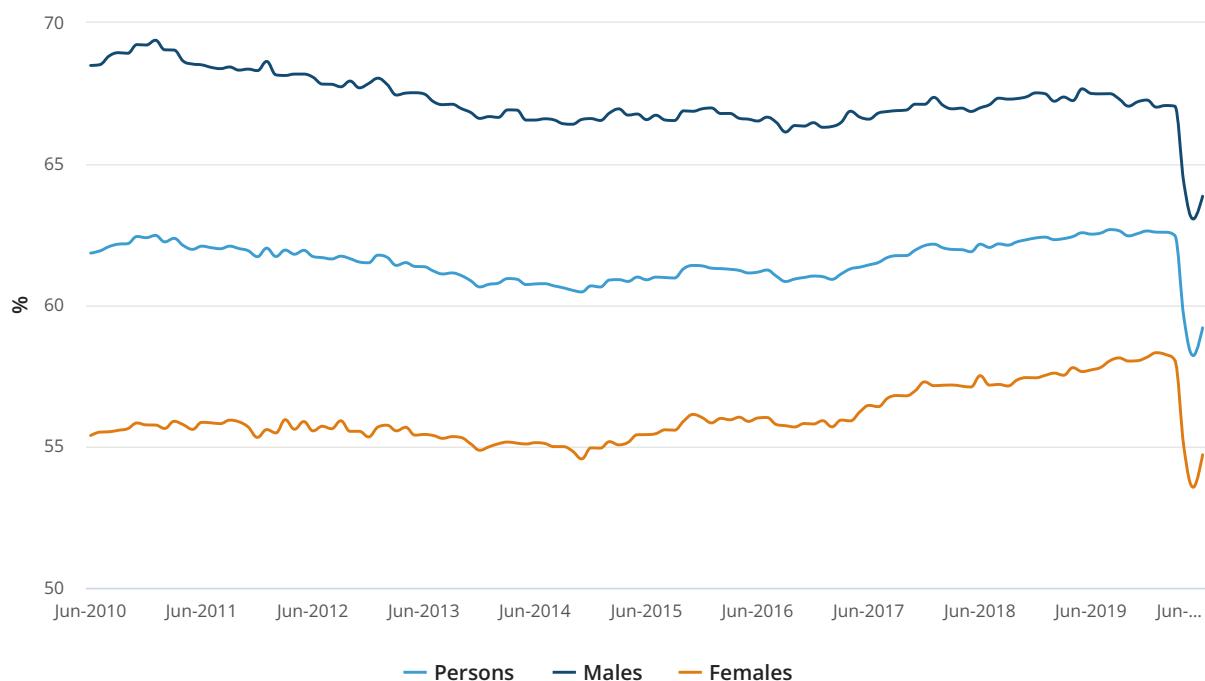
## Employment-to-population ratio

In seasonally adjusted terms, in June 2020:

- the employment-to-population ratio increased by 1.0 pts to 59.2%, and decreased by 3.3 pts from the same time last year

The employment-to-population ratio provides a measure of employment relative to the size of the population.

### Employment-to-population ratio, Seasonally adjusted



### Hours worked

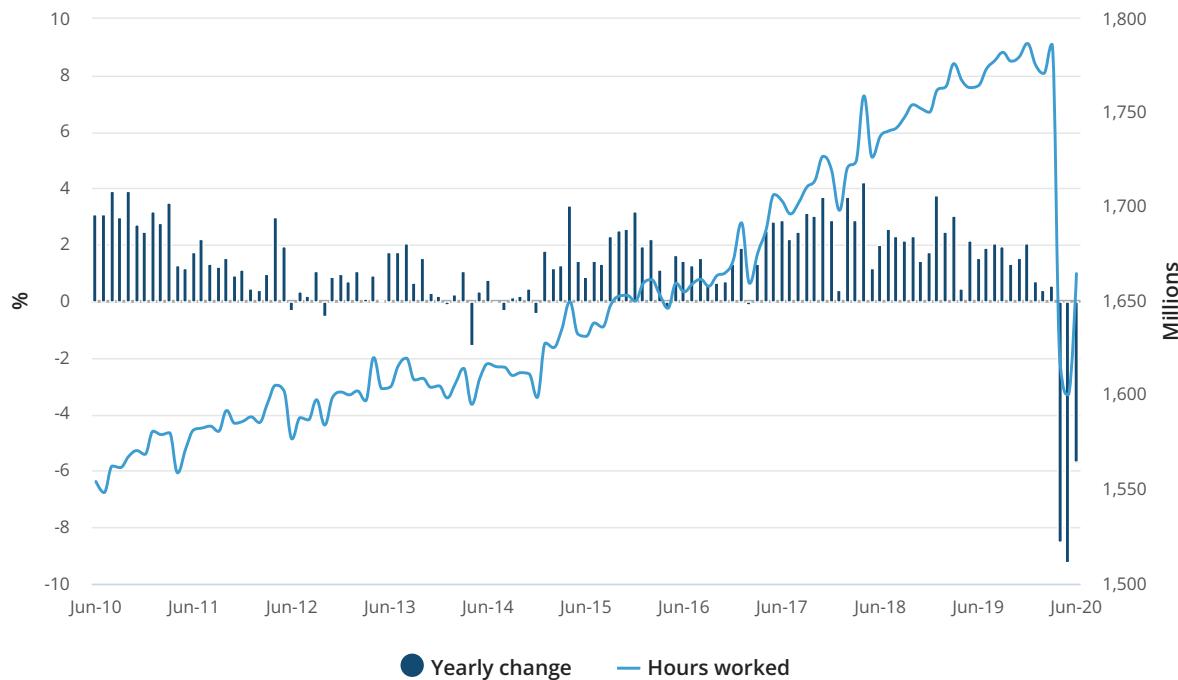
In seasonally adjusted terms, in June 2020, monthly hours worked in all jobs:

- increased by 64 million hours (4.0%) to 1,665 million hours
- decreased by 5.7% over the year, which is larger than the 4.1% decrease in employed people

See the article [Insights into Hours worked](https://author.absweb.aws.abs.gov.au/articles/) (<https://author.absweb.aws.abs.gov.au/articles/>)

[article-23943\)](#) for more.

## Monthly hours worked in all jobs, Seasonally adjusted

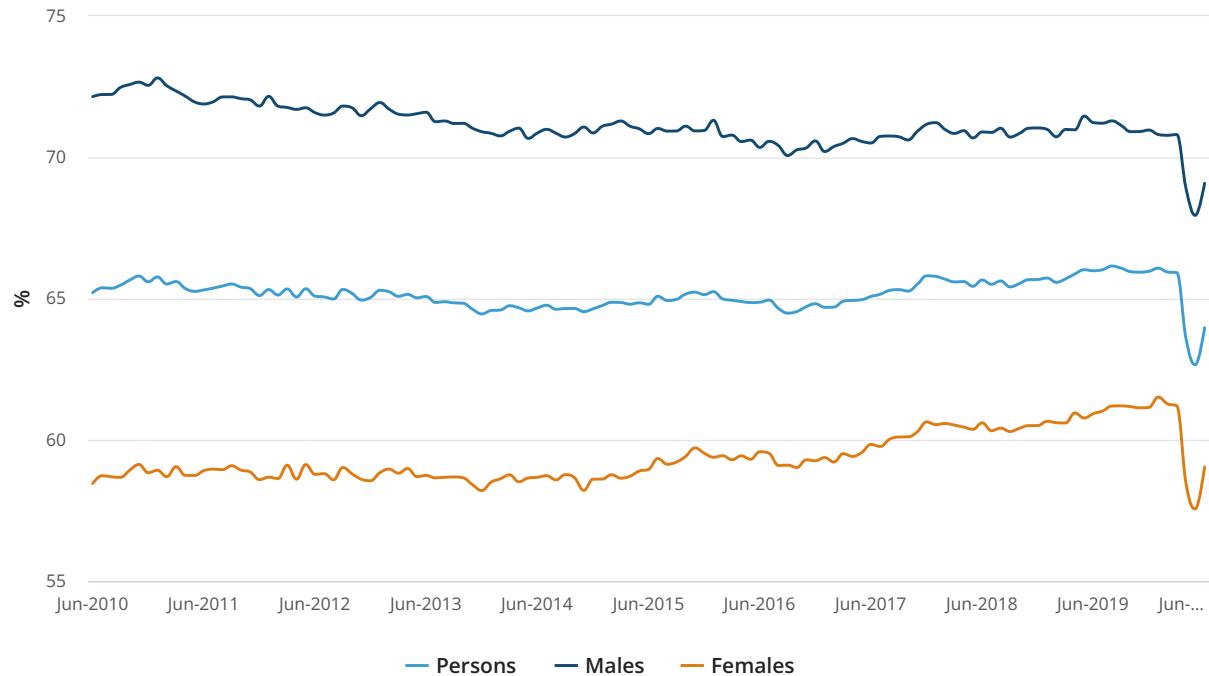


## Participation

In seasonally adjusted terms, in June 2020, the participation rate:

- increased by 1.3 pts to 64.0%, and decreased 2.0 pts over the year to June 2020
- increased by 1.1 pts for men (to 69.1%) and increased by 1.5 pts for women (to 59.0%)
- increased by 1.5 pts to 76.6% for 15 to 64 year olds (the working age population), and increased by 3.9 pts to 63.5% for 15 to 24 year olds

## Participation rate, Seasonally adjusted

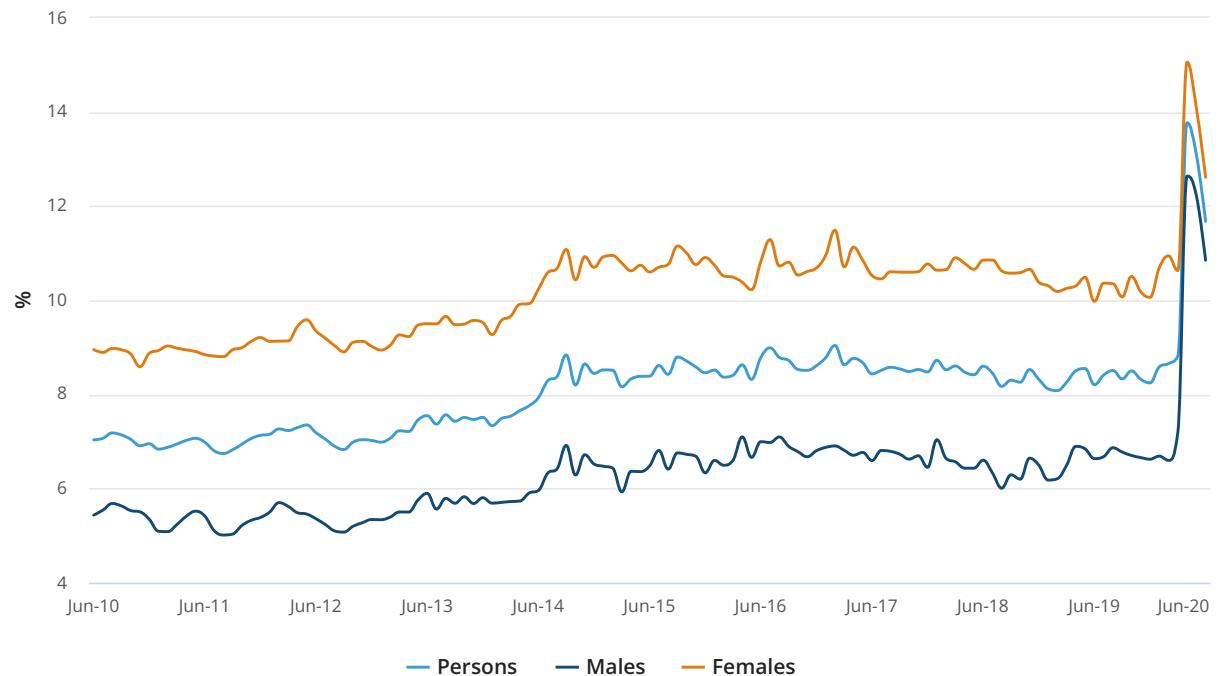


## Underemployment

In seasonally adjusted terms, in June 2020:

- the underemployment rate decreased by 1.4 pts to 11.7% (3.5 pts higher than a year ago)
- the underutilisation rate decreased by 1.0 pts to 19.1%

## Underemployment rate, Seasonally adjusted



## States and territories

June 2020, Seasonally adjusted

	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	Northern Territory	AU
Employed persons	3,937,000	3,277,200	2,406,700	817,300	1,294,600	245,200	126,900	
Employed persons - monthly change	2.1%	0.9%	2.2%	1.4%	1.7%	2.7%	-1.9%	
Employment to population ratio	59.3%	59.8%	58.0%	56.3%	60.8%	55.1%	67.6%	
Employment to population ratio - monthly change	1.2 pts	0.5 pts	1.2 pts	0.8 pts	1.0 pts	1.4 pts	-1.3 pts	
Unemployment rate	6.9%	7.5%	7.7%	8.8%	8.7%	6.9%	5.7%	
Unemployment rate - monthly change	0.5 pts	0.6 pts	-0.1 pts	0.9 pts	0.6 pts	0.6 pts	-1.8 pts	
Underemployment rate	11.3%	12.8%	11.2%	12.3%	10.8%	12.4%	9.9%	

New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	Northern Territory	Average
Underemployment rate - monthly change	-2.2 pts	-2.4 pts	-0.7 pts	-0.8 pts	-1.3 pts	-2.2 pts	-0.4 pts
Participation rate	63.7%	64.7%	62.9%	61.8%	66.6%	59.2%	71.6%
Participation rate - monthly change	1.6 pts	0.9 pts	1.3 pts	1.4 pts	1.6 pts	1.9 pts	-2.8 pts

## Rotation group analysis

### Sample composition and rotation

The Labour Force Survey sample can be thought of as comprising eight sub-samples (rotation groups), with each sub-sample remaining in the survey for eight months, and one group "rotating out" each month and being replaced by a new group "rotating in". As seven-eighths of the sample are common from one month to the next, changes in the estimates reflect real changes in the labour market, rather than changes in the sample. The replacement sample is generally selected from the same geographic areas as the outgoing one, as part of a representative sampling approach.

The sample comprises three components:

- the matched common sample (people who responded in both the current month and previous month)
- the unmatched common sample (people who responded in the current month but who did not respond in the previous month, or vice versa)
- the incoming rotation group (replacing people who rotated out)

The matched common sample describes the change observed for the same respondents in the current and previous month, while the other two components reflect differences between the aggregate labour force status of different groups of people.

While the rotation groups are designed to be representative of the population, the outgoing and incoming rotation groups will almost always have somewhat different characteristics, as they reflect different households and people. The design of the survey, including the weighting and estimation processes, ensures that these differences are generally relatively minor and do not affect the representativeness of the survey and its estimates. Monthly estimates are designed to be representative, regardless of the relative contribution of the three components of the sample.

The contributions of the three sample components to the original estimates of employed, unemployed and not in the labour force are in the Contribution from sample components to

estimates spreadsheet.

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## Managing COVID-19 impacts on the incoming rotation groups

With the suspension of face-to-face interviewing late in March 2020, and given the relative decrease in response in the incoming rotation group in April and May, the ABS boosted the size of sample for the June incoming rotation group. This resulted in an increased response level for the incoming rotation group in June, to around the same level as pre-COVID-19 rotation groups, with overall response remaining high.

The ABS has undertaken detailed sample decomposition analysis for the incoming rotation groups in April, May and June. All rotation groups have been used in the June 2020 Labour Force estimates, with an extra weighting treatment used to account for a small increase in non-response bias.

This weighting treatment will continue to be reviewed each month, as new data becomes available, and will result in some revisions to previous estimates. Revisions to estimates for May are most pronounced for Queensland estimates.

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## Incoming and outgoing rotation groups

The incoming rotation group in June 2020 had:

- a higher employment to population ratio than the group it replaced (60.0% in June 2020 compared to 58.5% in May 2020), and was higher than the sample as a whole (59.4%)
- a higher full-time employment to population ratio than the group it replaced (41.3% in June 2020 compared to 41.2% in May 2020), and was higher than the sample as a whole (40.7%)
- a higher unemployment rate than the group it replaced (7.9% in June 2020 compared to 6.5% in May 2020), and was higher than the sample as a whole (7.2%)
- a higher participation rate than the group it replaced (65.1% in June compared to 62.6% in May 2020), and was higher than the sample as a whole (64.0%)

The outgoing rotation group in June 2020, that will be replaced by a new incoming rotation group in July 2020, had:

- a lower employment to population ratio in June 2020 (58.9%) than the sample as a whole (59.4%)
- a lower full-time employment to population ratio in June 2020 (39.8%) than the sample as a whole (40.7%)

- a lower unemployment rate in June 2020 (6.8%) than the sample as a whole (7.2%)
- a lower participation rate in June 2020 (63.2%) than the sample as a whole (64.0%)

In addition to analysis across the entire sample, the ABS also undertake similar analysis for the responding sample in each state and territory each month, and highlights where there is a notable change for users to be aware of. For example, in June 2020, the incoming rotation group in Victoria had a higher unemployment to population ratio than the group it replaced, and had a higher unemployment to population ratio than the average over the matched sample. As with any notable month-to-month movement of this nature in state and territory estimates, the ABS recommends exercising a degree of caution in interpreting short-term changes.

As for its reporting for the entire sample, where the ABS has not highlighted a notable incoming rotation group effect, any larger changes should therefore be considered to reflect a broader change across the sample.

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## Comparability with seasonally adjusted data

The gross flows and rotation group data are in original terms only, and are included to provide additional information on the month-to-month movements. They have a considerable level of inherent sampling variability, which is specifically adjusted for in the seasonally adjusted series.

While trend data usually provides the best measure of the underlying behaviour of the labour market, in times of large changes in the labour market, seasonally adjusted data provides a better estimate of the most recent months. The ABS has temporarily suspended the trend series until labour market indicators become more stable, see; '[Suspension of trend series and changes to seasonal adjustment during the COVID-19 period](#)' ([/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/apr-2020#covid-19-impacts-and-changes](#)).

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## Contribution from sample components to estimates

 [Download XLS](#)  
[99 KB]

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## Data downloads

Labour Force Survey results are released in two stages, with additional spreadsheets published in [Labour Force, Australia, Detailed](#) ([/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release](#)) one week after this first

release. See the [Survey output \(/methodologies/labour-force-australia-methodology/jun-2020#survey-output\)](#) section of Labour Force, Australia methodology for more information.

## Labour force status

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Table 1. Labour force status by Sex, Australia - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[!\[\]\(1ac7c971e7df5bf204fbb84fd617a50a\_img.jpg\) Download XLS](#)

[6.87 MB]

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Table 4. Labour force status by Sex, New South Wales - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[!\[\]\(a6eac08c103efb51b40f958fe35f07bb\_img.jpg\) Download XLS](#)

[4.21 MB]

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Table 5. Labour force status by Sex, Victoria - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

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[4.22 MB]

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Table 6. Labour force status by Sex, Queensland - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

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[4.24 MB]

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Table 7. Labour force status by Sex, South Australia - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

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[4.26 MB]

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Table 8. Labour force status by Sex, Western Australia - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

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[4.25 MB]

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Table 9. Labour force status by Sex, Tasmania - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

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[4.45 MB]

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Table 10. Labour force status by Sex, Northern Territory - Trend and Original

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[5.08 MB]

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Table 10a. Labour force status by Sex, Northern Territory - Seasonally adjusted

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[275 KB]

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Table 11. Labour force status by Sex, Australian Capital Territory - Trend and Original

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[4.38 MB]

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Table 11a. Labour force status by Sex, Australian Capital Territory - Seasonally adjusted

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[275 KB]

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Table 12. Labour force status by Sex, State and Territory - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

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[41.46 MB]

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Table 12a. Labour force status by Sex, Territory - Seasonally adjusted

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[479 KB]

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Table 13. Labour force status for 15-24 year olds by Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

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[6.87 MB]

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Table 15. Labour force status for 15-24 year olds by Educational attendance (full-time) and Sex

[!\[\]\(9563e6845e9460f02a8b96af0592b0be\_img.jpg\) Download XLS](#)  
[1.58 MB]

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Table 16. Labour force status for 15-24 year olds by State, Territory and Educational attendance (full-time)

[!\[\]\(ab585dcc444ae74af86fb025f2220621\_img.jpg\) Download XLS](#)  
[8.4 MB]

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Table 17. Labour force status for 15-19 year olds by Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

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[5.27 MB]

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Table 18. Labour force status for 15-64 year olds by Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

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[6.86 MB]

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Hours worked

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Table 19. Monthly hours worked in all jobs by Employed full-time, part-time and Sex and by State and Territory - Trend and Seasonally adjusted

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[3.05 MB]

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Table 19a. Monthly hours worked in all jobs by Employed full-time, part-time and Sex and Territory - Seasonally adjusted

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[94.5 KB]

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Table 21. Quarterly hours worked in all jobs by Market and Non-market sector - Seasonally adjusted

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[83 KB]

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## Underemployment and underutilisation

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Table 22. Underutilised persons by Age and Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[45.49 MB]

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Table 23. Underutilised persons by State and Territory and Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[61.51 MB]

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Table 23a. Underutilised persons by Territory and Sex - Seasonally adjusted

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[712.5 KB]

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Table 24. Underutilised persons by Age and Sex (expanded analytical series)

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[757 KB]

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Table 25. Underutilised persons by State, Territory and Sex (expanded analytical series)

[↓ Download XLS](#)

[631 KB]

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## Flows into and out of employment

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GM1 - Labour force status and Gross changes (flows) by Age, Sex, State and Territory, February 1991 onwards

[↓ Download XLSX](#)

[97.04 MB]

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## All time series spreadsheets

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## All Time Series Spreadsheets

[!\[\]\(6701d2b106a848d9d8071847353cdc08\_img.jpg\) Download ZIP](#)

[41.44 MB]

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## Article archive

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### Understanding the labour force

[Understanding differences between Labour Force employment statistics and Weekly Payroll Jobs \(/articles/understanding-differences-between-labour-force-employment-statistics-and-weekly-payroll-jobs\)](#)(April 2020)

[Classifying people during the COVID-19 period \(/articles/classifying-people-labour-force-survey-during-covid-19-period\)](#)(March 2020)

[Labour Force Explained \(<https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/labour+force+explained>\)](#) (September 2017)

[Understanding the Australian labour force using ABS statistics \(<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features999Dec%202013>\)](#) (December 2013)

[Understanding full-time / part-time status in the Labour Force Survey \(<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features4Sep%202013>\)](#) (September 2013)

[Employment level estimates versus employment to population ratio explained \(<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features2Jan%202012>\)](#) (January 2012)

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### Employment and jobs

[Insights into industry and occupation \(/articles/insights-industry-and-occupation\)](#)(May 2020)

[Employment and unemployment: An international perspective \(/articles/employment-and-unemployment-international-perspective-may-2020\)](#)(May 2020)

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## Methodology

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## Methodology

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